

Regulatory Interface Management (RIM) Group Meeting

14 August 2014 1030 - 1500

Hinton House, Warrington

Minutes

Attendees

- Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC, by telephone)
- Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR)
- Environment Agency (EA)
- Radioactive Waste Management Limited (RWM, Chair and Secretary)
- Local Government Association, Nuclear Legacy Advisory Forum (NuLeAF)
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)

1. Introduction and opening remarks

The Chair welcomed attendees, in particular the new representative from NuLeAF who was attending the RIM Group meeting for the first time.

2. Minutes and actions from the previous meeting

The draft minutes of the previous meeting (20 February 2014) were accepted as a true record and approved for publication on the NDA website.

Action RIM2014/04: RIM Group Secretary to publish approved minutes of previous meeting (20 February 2014) on the NDA website.

Actions

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| RIM2012/11 | RIM Group Secretary to include item on 'Update on implementation of Localism Act 2011 amendments to major infrastructure development provisions' on the agenda for the next RIM Group meeting – closed . No longer considered relevant to RIM. |
| RIM2014/01 | RIM Group Secretary to publish approved minutes of previous meeting (29 October 2013) on the NDA website – complete . |
| RIM2014/02 | RIM Group Secretary to distribute Organisational Chart to RIM Group membership - complete . |
| RIM/2014/03 | Confirm date for RIM Group meeting in August 2014 – complete . |

3. DECC update

UK Government had published a new White Paper on Implementing Geological Disposal, setting out a renewed process for siting a geological disposal facility for the long-term management of higher activity radioactive waste. The principles underpinning the siting process remained unchanged: a voluntarist approach based on working with communities

willing to participate in it. Government had taken on board the key messages from the public consultation and the call for evidence that had preceded it.

The need for more information on geology to be available to communities early on in the siting process had been a clear message. Government had responded to this by establishing an upfront process of national geological screening using available information.

Government also recognised the need to establish the land-use planning system for the development of a geological disposal facility and borehole investigation of potential sites for such a facility. In England, such development would be a nationally significant infrastructure project under the Planning Act 2008. This would require secondary legislation and work was ongoing to develop appropriate legal definitions. Further work would be required to develop a National Policy Statement on geological disposal.

Action RIM2014/05: EA to provide DECC with definition of geological disposal facility etc. in Environmental Permitting (E&W) Regulations 2010.

The need for a robust process for working with communities throughout the siting process had also been apparent from the consultation responses. The White Paper took an enabling approach, setting out how such a process would be developed. A Community Representation Working Group (CRWG) would be established to advise Government on community representation, the test of public support and community investment. Development of the process for working with communities would be carried out in parallel with the work on national geological screening and the extension of the nationally significant infrastructure planning system to geological disposal.

DECC was also working with ONR to provide it with the powers to regulate the construction and operation of a geological disposal facility under the Nuclear Installations Act 1965.

The Geological Disposal Implementation Board was no longer expected to convene and Government was considering the use of other existing forums as a means of communication between DECC, NDA, other Government Departments and local authority representatives. The question was raised: might the RIM Group be a suitable forum for DECC to communicate with the regulators and local authorities?

RIM Group Chair explained that membership of the RIM Group is to be reviewed in light of the revised approach to implementing geological disposal set out in the White Paper.

Action RIM2014/06: RIM Group Chair to review RIM Group membership in light of changes to White Paper and propose changes to membership at next RIM Group meeting.

4. RWM update

Radioactive Waste Management Limited (RWM) had been established as a wholly owned subsidiary of NDA on the first of April. The RWM Board held its inaugural meeting on this date.

The RWM Board was chaired by a NDA Director and included NDA and independent non-executive directors, as well as RWM executive directors.

ONR and EA had interviewed RWM Board members in late April to make an early stage assessment of RWM's readiness to function as a standalone subsidiary organisation. The

regulators had concluded that RWM Board members were aware of the issues that they faced and were initiating appropriate actions to address them.

RWM's Board had appointed a HSSSEQ Special Advisor and had established an HSSSEQ Committee to advise it on HSSEQ matters.

RWM was in the process of developing a Corporate Strategy, which would assist with long-term planning, along with RWM's mission, vision and values.

RWM's role in higher activity waste management was developing. In particular, an extension to the upstream optioneering project would help waste owners realise opportunities to improve the lifecycle management of wastes.

RWM had vacancies for a Stakeholder and Communications Director and a Siting Director.

RWM was to update its generic Disposal System Safety Case (gDSSC) in 2016.

As per the White Paper, Government had asked RWM to carry out a national geological screening exercise. It would involve a programme of work to develop and then apply National Geological Screening Guidance to existing information on the geology of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This would identify geological information of potential relevance to the development of a geological disposal facility and present it in a form that would make it accessible to communities.

The development and application of the National Geological Screening Guidance would involve public consultations and be overseen by an Independent Review Panel established by the Geological Society of London at the request of DECC. CoRWM were also expected to scrutinise the national geological screening process.

Detailed planning was ongoing, but development work would begin later this year with initial media announcements, followed by one or more technical events for experts in the geological community. The event(s) would be hosted by the Geological Society of London and would provide those experts with an understanding of geological disposal.

The nature and extent of the regulators' involvement in the National Geological Screening exercise was yet to be agreed and RWM would be meeting with them to explore this.

The Chief Executive for the Office for Nuclear Development in DECC, and the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Environment and Climate Change, had visited RWM. The latter had reiterated the importance of the development of geological disposal.

RWM had attended a meeting on the development of Safety Reference Levels for radioactive waste disposal facilities by the Western European Nuclear Regulators' Association (WENRA).

RWM would be holding a Level 1 meeting with the regulators. RWM's Chief Executive would be attending the next ONR meeting for licensees.

RWM had provided ONR with a draft of its guidance on the application of safeguards during the packaging of higher activity waste. A meeting had been arranged to discuss it. RWM's was finalising a report on the application of safeguards at a UK GDF which would be submitted to Euratom.

RWM had put a scrutiny agreement in place with ONR and was working on putting one in place with EA. An agreement with SEPA was also in development.

5. ONR update

ONR supported the need for a geological disposal facility as part of the Government's policy on higher activity waste management. ONR would engage with stakeholders - as requested - to explain their regulatory processes and how they would use them to assure the safety of any future geological disposal facility. ONR will continue to regulate the packaging and interim storage of higher activity wastes.

ONR had been meeting with DECC to discuss licensing, third party liabilities and delicensing in relation to a geological disposal facility.

ONR's consultation on its review of its Safety Assessment Principles had closed and a summary of responses would be available later in the year.

ONR had begun work on a review of the nuclear site licence conditions.

ONR and EA planned to publish updated Joint regulatory guidance on radioactive waste management later in the year.

ONR would be reviewing and revising the National Objectives, Requirements and Model Standards (NORMS) nuclear site security guidance to bring its approach more in line with its objective-based approach to nuclear safety.

6. EA update

EA supported the publication of the Government White Paper on Implementing Geological Disposal.

EA would be mapping the WENRA Safety Reference Levels for radioactive waste disposal facilities against its Guidance on Requirements for Authorisation of near-surface and geological disposal facilities (GRA) in anticipation of an up-date of the GRA.

7. SEPA update

SEPA was considering carrying out a review of RWM's disposability assessment process with a view to ensuring that the position that packages conditioned in anticipation of geological disposal are also suitable for long-term management in near-surface facilities (as per Government policy in Scotland) remains sound.

8. NuLeAF update

NuLeAF was preparing a briefing paper on the Government White Paper on Implementing Geological Disposal, which would outline the issues relevant to local government.

NuLeAF had been commissioned by Low Level Waste Repository Ltd to undertake research on the 'Duty to Co-operate' and wider changes to the planning regimes, which would consider their implications for the management of low level radioactive waste.

NuLeAF had published a briefing paper on community benefits and radioactive waste management, which outlined NuLeAF's position and proposed a benefits framework.

NuLeAF advised that it would take considerable interest in NDA's development of its third strategy and in NDA's proposals to develop a Higher Activity Waste strategy.

9. Other Business

None

10. Date of Next Meeting

The Chair explained that, with the publication of the White Paper on Implementing Geological Disposal, RWM was developing its plans to reflect the revised siting process and would wait until these were further developed before convening a further RIM meeting.

Summary of ongoing actions

RIM2014/04	RIM Group Secretary	Publish approved minutes of previous meeting (20 February 2014) on the NDA website.
RIM2014/05	Environment Agency	Provide DECC with definition of geological disposal facility etc. in Environmental Permitting (E&W) Regulations 2010.
RIM2014/06	RIM Group Chair	Review RIM Group membership in light of changes to White Paper and propose changes to membership at next RIM Group meeting.